



# Stateline

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## STATE PR PROFESSIONALS WIN STATEWIDE AWARDS

By TODD GRECO  
Media Relations Manager, State Lottery

Last month, Colorado's chapter of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) honored a number of state agencies at its annual awards banquet. Overall, public relations efforts from state organizations won 12 awards, including the 2002 CEO of the Year honors.

University of Colorado CEO Dennis Brimhall, who has worked in the health-care industry for 30 years and has been with University of Colorado Hospital since 1988, comments, "It's a terrific honor to be recognized by the Colorado public relations community in this way."

The Colorado Lottery received four awards for their media relations efforts. Media staff took home two Gold Pick awards, the first for their *Colorado Powerball* campaign and the second for *The Summer of Powerball - The Power of Special Events*. The Lottery's Marketing Communications department including Media Relations Manager Todd Greco, Marketing Communications Manager Lisa Murray and Promotions and Special Events Manager, Laura Stitt worked on the award-winning projects.

For their efforts in consumer relations, the Lottery won a Silver Pick award for the overall *launch of Powerball* and in the Multimedia/Video category, the Lottery received an award for their *Retailer Relations Video* produced by Community Relations Manager Judy Rose.

Colorado State Parks received honors for their comprehensive *Colorado's Year of the Trails Announcement*. The project team for this award-winning submission included Steven Hall, Deb Duke, Bob Finch, Shannon Tortorella, Debbie Tracy, and Mariah Calkins.

State Parks also received a Silver Pick award for the overall *Year of the Trails Campaign* in the Community Relations category. This campaign was a collaborative effort between federal, local, non-profit and for-profit outdoor organizations and land management agencies. A partnership was crafted among 25 trail groups and public land agencies including the U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado, Colorado Lottery and Colorado Trail Foundation. Other partners included local government organizations, which proved particularly effective. A lot of hours went into planning this project and Steven Hall, Shannon Tortorella, Deb Duke, Mariah Calkins, Debbie Tracy, Bob Finch, John Geerdes, Chris Foreman, Nancy Scalise and Ben Pedrett should commended for their dedication.

The Department of Transportation motored its way to the awards stand to collect two Silver Pick awards: *The Click It or Ticket, May Mobilization*



*The State Forest State Park American Lakes Trail is one of the many beautiful trails highlighted by the Year of Trails Project.*

*Media Blitz* campaign, designed to encourage motorists to wear their seat belts at all times while in an automobile, and the *Heat is On! Halloween Poster* campaign persuading people not to drink and drive on Halloween. In order to best reach the target audience, the Heat is On! Team designed posters printed both in English and Spanish. For a month prior to Halloween, law enforcement agencies across the state delivered posters to bars and restaurants in their communities asking them to hang them as a public service announcement.

Rounding out the awards was Colorado State University, which collected several honors. In the Special Events category, a Gold Pick was awarded to the Martin Luther King Day Committee for their *One Man's Vision, My Responsibility* program. Dell Rae Mollenberg and Joe Rymski were awarded a Silver Pick Award for the *AgNews website*, while Jennifer Dimas collected a Silver Pick award for the *Lynn Turner/Center for Quality Finance Reporting* project. Additionally, the school's Communications and Marketing department took home a Silver Pick award for the *Al Yates: A Journey West* project in the Multimedia/Video category.

## GOOD NEWS - NO DECEMBER HEALTH PREMIUMS!

Employees enrolled in a 2003 State health, dental, optional life or optional long-term disability (LTD) plan will not have a December premium payment. This means more money in your December paycheck, and more money in your pocket for the holidays.

How can this be?

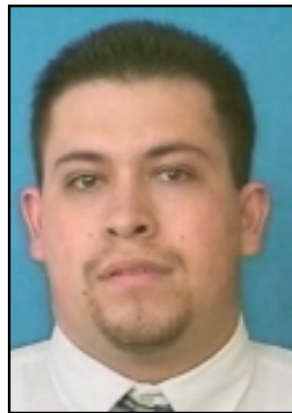
For health, dental, optional life and optional LTD plans, we currently pay premiums for the following month's coverage. For example, our November premium payment provides coverage in December.

Beginning January 1, 2003, premiums for these State plans will provide coverage for the month in which they are paid -- January's premium provides coverage in January.

Employees leaving State employment will maintain coverage through the last day of the month in which a premium is paid.

If you have questions about this change or your December paycheck, contact your department's benefits or payroll administrator.

## COLORADO LOSES A DEDICATED CORRECTIONS OFFICER



Officer  
Eric Autobee

The State of Colorado mourns the loss of Correctional Officer Eric Autobee. He was attacked by an inmate at the Limon Correctional Facility on October 18, and flown to Swedish Medical Center where he was pronounced dead at 12:30pm. It was a senseless act of violence that took the life of a promising young man early in his career and it was a great loss for our

State. Officer Autobee was the first correctional officer killed by an inmate since 1929.

Officer Autobee was laid to rest at a funeral mass on October 23. Governor Owens joined the friends and family at the funeral in Colorado Springs.

The Autobee family are long-time residents of Pueblo and avid hunters. Both Eric's father and younger brother have poignant memories of their many hunting trips together.

"Eric was a wonderful young man," said Autobee's parents, Bob and Lola, in a statement the family released. "We are proud to have been his parents and to have had those 23 years with him. We will always miss him, but will not mourn. The Lord chose him... and he is in a better place."

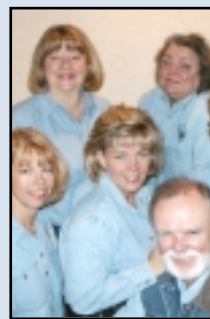
A scholarship fund has been established in Autobee's memory. Donations may be sent to:

Eric Autobee Memorial Scholarship Fund  
Wells Fargo Bank  
201 West Eighth Street  
Pueblo, CO 81003  
719-544-3924

## Inside Stateline

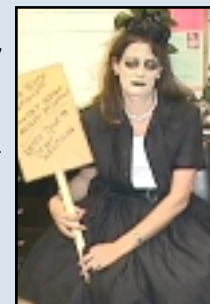
### STATE PATROL HELPS VICTIMS

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### LET'S FIGHT FOR TOTAL COMPENSATION

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# State Patrol’s Victim Advocates Lending a Helping Hand

By Shari Ulrich  
Retired Victim Advocate, Colorado State Patrol

If you’ve ever been in a fender bender you know firsthand the inconvenience, expense, and seemingly endless paperwork such an incident entails. Multiply the aftermath of such an event by a factor of say, 50, and you have some idea of the kind of situations Colorado State Patrol Victim Advocates respond to on a daily basis. Headed by coordinator Dolores Mitchell, the five women and two men advocates are called out whenever a serious injury and or fatal traffic crash occurs on interstate highways and major roads covered by the Colorado State Patrol. In 1990 a single advocate served the entire State. Thanks to state and federal grants, six additional advocates were added to the program in 1995.

Their job is not an easy one. It requires being on-call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Surprisingly, even with such a hectic and demanding schedule, turnover in the 12 years the program has been in existence has been minimal. “The demands are great, but the rewards even greater,” says one advocate. “For a long time, people seriously injured in traffic crashes were not considered victims under the law. Many courts and victim compensation units simply did not equate injuries resulting from the actions of a careless or drunk driver to be equivalent to injuries suffered as the result of an assault.” However “intentional” or “unintentional” the at-fault driver’s actions, the end result of being the victim of a serious crash is the same—months, even years, of recovery both physically and financially. It takes a very long time to regain one’s equilibrium after such a traumatic event, particularly when a loved one’s life is lost. Now, however, victims of crimes such as vehicular assault, vehicular homicide, careless driving resulting in death, and hit-and-run are accorded rights previously given only to victims of violent crimes.



The State Patrol Victim Advocates Team: from left to right, back row David Mealiff, Betzy Bicknase, Jane Kay. Middle row: Linda Hunter, Dolores Mitchell, Kristen Hall. Front: Bill Brown.

when you consider how many drivers in Colorado are visitors from out-of-State or foreign countries. A well-organized network of troopers and advocates throughout the State allows instate notifications to proceed quickly. Out-of-State and foreign notifications which require the assistance of out-of-State and foreign law enforcement agencies as well as consulates and embassies may take somewhat longer. Advocates have located and notified family members everywhere from tiny villages in Mexico to safaris in Africa.

Locating and notifying family members is but a small part of the work done by advocates. After a crash they frequently retrieve personal

belongings from the vehicle, stay with the victims at the hospital until family arrives, find care for injured pets, secure lodging for uninjured passengers, arrange transportation for family members coming from out-of-State, notify victims’ employers, provide information and assistance to school principals and counselors of school-age victims, negotiate with tow companies, notify insurance companies for incapacitated victims, offer landlord intervention, provide up-to-date information on veterans’ benefits, supply contact information for social security and workers compensation offices, and secure residences until family members arrive. They make sure that victims and family members have an opportunity to speak to the investigating trooper and that the circumstances of the crash are clearly understood. Especially important, they inform victims and their families of the rights accorded them under the Colorado Victim Rights Amendment and provide the District Attorney’s office with victim information required for the court process.

In cases of fatalities, advocates work closely with coroners and funeral homes to arrange for shipment of remains and personal effects. They help victims’ families complete compensation applications so that burial costs may be subsidized and provide emotional support through continuing personal contact, provision of information on grief and loss, and referrals to counseling. Contact with families is often maintained for months while the criminal case is developed. It is not uncommon for the relatives of a fatal victim to call after a year and ask to be shown the site of the crash. It simply takes some families that long to absorb what has happened.

Asked what the most difficult part of their job is, Please See ADVOCATE, p. 4



## MAKING THE MOST OF OUR PEOPLE AND RESOURCES

BY JEFF SCHUTT  
DIRECTOR OF THE DIVISION OF HUMAN RESOURCES, DPA

Often in the most difficult economic times, an employer’s first reaction – both private and public sector – to budget constraints is to make cuts in employee training and workforce development programs. Employers sometimes view training and workforce development as supplemental; something they would like to do when they can afford to.

Ironically, it’s at difficult times like these that we can least afford to neglect our workforce and its continued development.

Why? Because as we continue to expect more and more of our employees, we must make a conscious commitment to train and adequately prepare them to meet the added demands that come with challenging times.

The question then becomes, how do we make workforce development a priority in extremely tight budget years? Just as employees are asked to work smarter, the State as an employer needs to work smarter to provide learning opportunities for its employees.

This year’s DPA Fall Conference did just that. For instance, DPA scheduled its annual Risk Management Conference and Human Resources Conference (co-sponsored with the Colorado State Managers Association) on successive days, making it easier for employees to attend both days and more cost-effective for employees coming from outside the Denver/Metro area.

DPA was able to offer each full-day conference for only \$35. While considerably less expensive than most such full-day conferences, both the Risk and HR conference, did not sacrifice quality. We accomplished this through the cooperative efforts of two dedicated internal teams, and I applaud them for their vision and work.

We also did so by tapping high-caliber, dynamic, experts from within state employment and from the private sector – Greg Walcher, Troy Eid, Don Ament, Joe Weinand, Velveta Golightly Howell, John F. Dulles II, Wendell Pryor, Senator Peggy Reeves and Senator Norma Anderson to name a few – to address participants and lead workshops. I want to thank all our presenters for volunteering their time.

Additionally, I want to thank all 500 or so employees who attended the conference and all the supervisors who understood the importance of enabling their employees to attend. It is our combined commitment – employer, managers, employees, and those who care from the private sector – that will help us afford to make workforce development important even in tough times.

The theme of this year’s HR Conference was “When the Going Gets Tough...” This is a timely theme that implies the need to confront difficult times head on with a can do attitude, and both the Risk and HR conferences emphasized innovative ways to deal with the challenges we all currently face – insurance issues, stress, safety in the workplace, leadership, ethics and more.

I walked away from the Fall Conference this year thinking about what I can personally do to help my department and the State make it through these difficult times – thinking about how I can make the most of my Division’s people and resources, and knowing, that whatever solutions I came up with, they should not sacrifice my commitment to employee development.

### IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR STATE EMPLOYEES RECEIVING STATE HEALTH BENEFITS

- There will be no self-funding assessment for 2003.
- There will be no December premiums for state health, dental, optional life or optional long-term disability.
- Open Enrollment deadline is extended for all employees through **November 18, 2002.**



# IMPROVING EMPLOYEE TOTAL COMPENSATION

By TROY A. EID  
DPA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

(R-Beulah) has stepped up to the plate to help move Colorado toward finally providing a more competitive total compensation package for state employees. This is good news not only to the

As preparations begin for the 2003 Legislative Session, incoming House Speaker, Lola Spradley

Governor Owens advocate for this extra money.

Yet despite this additional \$72 million, many Colorado state employees are still losing ground. Why?

In virtually every other State, the personnel director sets benefits levels (i.e., what the State contributes to an employee's insurance) based on an annual market survey of comparable employers. We do exactly the same survey here in Colorado as required by our current total compensation law, which provides that the state personnel director

legal authority that my counterparts have in other states - DPA would have spent about \$40 million extra on insurance in 2003. This would have lowered rate increases for most employees dramatically. The rest of the pot could have been spent on salary. On balance, the workforce would have been substantially better off, especially our lower income employees.

Instead, because I lacked that authority, I worked with you against the odds and won a more than \$55 million increase in Salary Survey plus \$9 million in performance pay. Yet employees on our insurance plan are actually losing ground because their total compensation package has such a relatively poor insurance benefit component.

I'm also concerned about the serious inequities of the current system - especially the way we are hurting our middle- and lower-income state employees.

Health insurance premium increases hurt the lowest-paid workers the most. For instance, when the premium for health insurance for employee + 2 goes up \$200 per month, that's roughly 8 percent of an administrative assistant's entire salary. Salary survey plus performance pay awards won't even begin to make up for that employee's loss in total compensation.

The reality is that the current employee compensation system is not helping most of our employees in a way that maximizes the \$72 million in extra money spent and meets the most urgent needs of our workforce. That's why it is so exciting that Rep. Spradley, along with legislators from both political parties, are listening to our fellow state employees and preparing to take action in the 2003 legislative session.



Employees at Fort Lewis College staged a demonstration regarding the 2003 premium increases by coming to the benefits open enrollment meeting (held on Halloween) dressed as "dead and half-dead state employees" complete with signs expressing their dismay over insurance premiums.  
Photo courtesy of Vicky Caskey & Theresa Marshall



future of Colorado's state workforce, but also for the citizens who depend on us.

The current employee compensation system is outmoded and almost unbelievably rigid. While salary adjustments are typically made each year, performance pay has not yet been funded at the levels originally envisioned by the Legislature when it eliminated the anniversary ("step") seniority system.

Meanwhile, health insurance benefits for Colorado state employees have fallen 20 years behind the times and are frozen in the law. Consequently, the amount of money that the State contributes to its employees' insurance has rarely increased even when the Legislature has chosen to make annual salary adjustments.

In contrast, other States typically give their state personnel directors the ability to offer a competitive salary and benefits package each year based on a single legislative appropriation. Ironically, Colorado already has such a total compensation law, but over the years it has eroded into an annual salary survey law, with insurance benefits and performance pay funded separately if at all. Representative Spradley's proposed legislation would put the "total" back into Colorado's total prevailing compensation system.

Representative Spradley's reform cannot come quickly enough.

Colorado's currently Balkanized employee compensation system leads to some unintended and increasingly unfortunate consequences. Often the right hand doesn't seem to know what the left hand is doing. Here's a simple example from earlier this year:

The Legislature spent \$72 million on additional employee benefits and salary this past session, a modern record unmatched during the last three administrations. I'm proud to have helped

shall recommend a total prevailing compensation package each year to the Legislature and the Governor. Yet this law has a loophole: The Legislature has to pass a law each year to fund the benefits portion of the package, and hasn't ever - at any time - during at least the last 20 years. Consequently, the State now pays for only about 38 percent to 45 percent (depending on the number of insured persons) of total cost of employees' insurance, compared to 75 to 80 percent for comparable employers.

If, instead, I had had the legal authority to take the same \$72 million pot and prioritize it according to the workforce's needs as the Legislature contemplated when it enacted Colorado's total compensation statute - the same

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Hi Troy -

It was a pleasure to meet you this morning. As you discussed, it will be important for the State to make changes in its contribution level in order to attract new employees from the private sector.

From my own experience, I can tell you that the State's insurance premiums are 4-8 times higher than what I paid as a MediaOne Group employee and from what I currently pay as a retiree. In fact, had it not been for the benefits I have through MediaOne Group/AT&T Broadband, I would not have been financially able to accept this position. I currently pay \$60 per month for health insurance for myself and two dependents.

Comparable insurance through the State's plans would range between \$282 and \$475 per month. I know you asked me to specifically address the Health plan but you might be interested to know that there is also a significant difference in the cost of dental insurance. I pay \$30 for myself and two dependents for the premium plan. The State's plan is more than double that amount at \$84 per month.

Please let me know if you have any questions or if I can assist you further in this regard.

Jill Elggren

*ADVOCATE, from p. 1*

most advocates agree that crashes involving children are especially heartrending. “I once had to tell a family that all three of their daughters had been killed in a crash,” said one advocate. “It was excruciatingly difficult. I could hardly get the words out.” Shortly before, this same advocate had covered an incident in which parents witnessed the crash and subsequent deaths of their three sons who were riding in a vehicle behind them on a family vacation. “The heartache is unbelievable. You wonder sometimes how people go on.”

You may wonder why these victim advocates have chosen a job in which such trauma is so pervasive. The answer appears to lie in their knowledge of what would result if they were not available to help. “We basically create organization out of chaos,” remarked one longtime advocate. “We provide stability, information and direction which can help a victim put one foot in front of the other until he or she regains equilibrium. Most of us consider it not just a job, but a calling.”

Their dedication and expertise has been recognized numerous times by victim assistance groups and the Colorado State Patrol. In 1997, Coordinator Dolores Mitchell was awarded “Victim Advocate of the Year” by the Colorado Organization for Victim Assistance. In 2000 the State Patrol Victim Advocate program was recognized as the Outstanding Victim Services Program in the state of Colorado. The group also received the Colorado State Patrol Colonels’ Award for Excellence in January, 2000.

“It is a real team effort,” say the advocates. “The program has the support and enthusiasm it needs to succeed from the top down. We could not do our job if it weren’t for the incredible assistance we have from every level of the State Patrol. The activity which may appear seamless to those watching us in action is a tribute to the support of our effort from the Chief on down. The troopers, the dispatchers, the administrative assistants are all part of what has made our unit so successful. We couldn’t do it without them, and we appreciate them more than we can say.”

# Stateline

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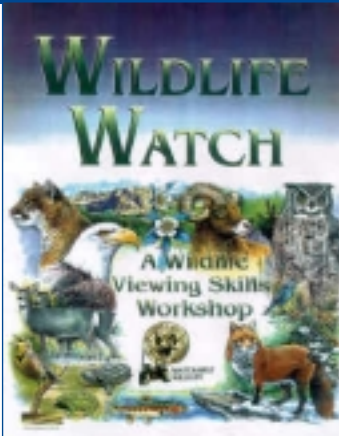
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Wildlife Watch is a wildlife viewing skills workshop designed by the Watchable Wildlife program of the Colorado Division of Wildlife, Department of Natural Resources. **State employees and family members** (adults and children over 12) are invited to attend any workshop **free of charge!** Participants need to register for Wildlife Watch hotline online or by phone. The workshop dates, times and places are detailed on both the Web site and phone line. When you sign-up, be sure to let us know that you are a state employee and tell us how many are coming. Either four or eight hours in length, each Wildlife Watch workshop culminates with a group field trip where participants can try out their newfound skills at a local park or open space. Public workshops are held regularly at various sites statewide..

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# “STATE OF THE STATE WORKFORCE” TOWNHALL MEETINGS

Come discuss with DPA Executive Director Troy A. Eid and Jeff Schutt, Director of the Division of Human Resources key issues facing state employees, such as Health Care Benefits, Performance Based Pay, Salary Survey or any other issues that are important.

**November 19**  
Grand Junction - Mesa State College,  
Liff Auditorium, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.


**December 3**  
Colorado Springs - University of Colorado  
University Center Theater, Rm 302, 8:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m.

**December 3**  
Cañon City - Corrections Training Academy  
2285 Fremont Drive, Noon-2:00 p.m.

**December 6**  
Golden - School of Mines,  
Ballrooms A & B, Ben Parker Student Center,  
11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

There will be additional meetings scheduled soon.  
Contact **Jacque Morley** at **303-866-2393** for information.

Stateside



Matt Holman

We just fed him every time he meowed.